

REMARKS

Upon entry of the Amendment, Claims 7-8 and 10-19 will be pending in the application. Claims 1-6 and 9 are canceled. Claims 12-19 have been withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner.

Independent Claim 7 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of Claim 9. No new matter is added.

Entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested along with reconsideration and review of the claims on the merits.

Response to Restriction Requirement

The Examiner issued a restriction requirement to one of the following inventions under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1-11, drawn to an apparatus for removing edge pool.
- II. Claims 12-19, drawn to a coating method.

In response, Applicants affirm the provisional election made during a telephone conversation with Mr. Howard Bernstein on January 17, 2006, to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1-11 without traverse.

Response to Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as assertedly being anticipated by Saito et al (US 2003/041968), for the reasons given in the Office Action.

Applicants respond as follows.

Claims 1-6 and 9 are canceled, making the rejection of these claims moot.

Claim 7 is amended to recite “wherein the mechanism comprises a plurality of rinse nozzles for supplying the solvents having different dissolving rates for dissolving the coating film.”

Despite the Examiner’s understanding, Applicants submit that the subject matter of Claim 11 as well as the subject matter of Claim 10 do in fact provide structural description to Applicants’ claimed coating apparatus and should therefore be given patentable weight and reconsideration thereof.

According to the present invention, as recited in currently amended Claim 7, there is provided a coating apparatus for removing edge pool formed on a wafer side surface of a coating film deposited on a wafer by edge rinse treatment using a rinse solution, comprising:

a mechanism in which the edge rinse treatment is performed using any one selected from solvents having different dissolving rates for dissolving the coating film, the any one selected from solvents being used as the rinse solution,

wherein the mechanism comprises a plurality of rinse nozzles for supplying the solvents having different dissolving rates for dissolving the coating film.

Thus, in the present invention, the mechanism has a plurality of rinse nozzles for supplying the solvents having different dissolving rates for dissolving the coating film, as shown in Figs. 15 through 19.

By using the coating apparatus provided with a plurality of rinse nozzles (the nozzles 202

and 203 shown in Fig.15), any type of rinse solution can be selected in consideration of the dissolving rate for dissolving an organic antireflection film or a photoresist film, which is formed by applying a film solution thereof. Consequently, the edge hump can be suppressed so as not to cause any problem, and the edge residue is not formed.

In contrast, the mechanism of Saito has only one rinse nozzle. Therefore, Saito fails to disclose at least the above-mentioned feature of the present invention where "the mechanism has a plurality of rinse nozzles".

Thus, Saito fails to anticipate the present invention.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the anticipation rejection.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Appln. No.: 10/676,032

Atty. Docket No. Q77826

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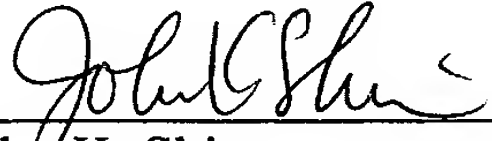
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